

4/5/16

5:42 P.M.

Chapter No. 351
16/HR43/R1540CS
GO 15a

HOUSE BILL NO. 968

Originated in House



Clerk

HOUSE BILL NO. 968

AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 43-27-203, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO CLARIFY THE SYNONYMOUS MEANING OF THE TERMS "HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY DIPLOMA" AND "GED" FOR PURPOSES OF QUALIFYING STUDENTS IN THE MISSISSIPPI NATIONAL GUARD YOUTH CHALLENGE PROGRAM FOR GRADUATION; TO BRING FORWARD SECTION 37-4-5, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, FOR PURPOSES OF POSSIBLE AMENDMENT; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

SECTION 1. Section 43-27-203, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

43-27-203. (1) There is created under the Mississippi National Guard a program to be known as the "Youth Challenge Program." The program shall be an interdiction program designed for children determined to be "at risk" by the National Guard.

(2) The Mississippi National Guard shall implement and administer the Youth Challenge Program and shall promulgate rules and regulations concerning the administration of the program. The National Guard shall prepare written guidelines concerning the nomination and selection process of participants in the program,

and such guidelines shall include a list of the factors considered in the selection process.

(3) Participation in the Youth Challenge Program shall be on a voluntary basis. No child may be sentenced by any court to participate in the program; however, a youth court judge may refer the program to a child when, under his determination, such program would be sufficient to meet the needs of the child.

(4) The Mississippi National Guard, under the auspices of the Challenge Academy, may award an adult high school diploma to each participant who meets the requirements for a High School Equivalency Diploma equivalent under the policies and guidelines of the GED Testing Service of the American Council on Education or other high school equivalency exam and any other minimum academic requirements prescribed by the National Guard and Challenge Academy for graduation from the Youth Challenge Program. Participants in the program who do not meet the minimum academic requirements may be awarded a special certificate of attendance. The Mississippi National Guard and the Challenge Academy shall establish rules and regulations for awarding the adult high school diploma and shall prescribe the form for such diploma and the certificate of attendance.

(5) The Mississippi National Guard may accept any available funds that may be used to defray the expenses of the program, including, but not limited to, federal funding, public or private

funds and any funds that may be appropriated by the Legislature for that purpose.

SECTION 2. Section 37-4-5, Mississippi Code of 1972, is brought forward as follows:

37-4-5. (1) The terms "Junior College Commission" and "State Board for Community and Junior Colleges," whenever they appear in the laws of the State of Mississippi, mean the "Mississippi Community College Board."

(2) The term "High School Equivalency Diploma," whenever it appears in the laws of the State of Mississippi, means a high school diploma that has been approved by the Mississippi Community College Board.

(3) The terms "general educational development," "general education development" and "GED," whenever they appear in the laws of the State of Mississippi, mean a high school equivalency diploma as defined in subsection (2) of this section.

SECTION 3. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after its passage.

PASSED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
February 29, 2016

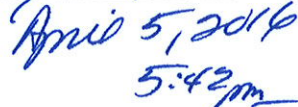

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PASSED BY THE SENATE
March 24, 2016


PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

APPROVED BY THE GOVERNOR


GOVERNOR


April 5, 2016
5:42pm